

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7780

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CPRS, MA

SUBJECT: SHIPMENT OF BENDIX PERSONAL BELONGINGS

REF: STATE 268393

SUMMARY: MALAGASY GOVERNMENT REGULATIONS REQUIRE THAT ALL WRITTEN AND RECORDED MATERIAL EXPORTED FROM THE COUNTRY BE REVIEWED BY GOVERNMENT CENSORS. ACCORDINGLY, BFEC EMPLOYEES LEFT THEIR BOOKS, RECORDS, FILES, TAPES AND FILMS WITH BFEC ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL. AFTER THE DEPARTURE OF BFEC PERSONNEL ON JULY 27, THE BULK OF THE MATERIAL WAS TRANSLATED AND SUBMITTED TO THE BIBLIOTHEQUE NATIONALE ON SEPTEMBER 19 FOR REVIEW. TO DATE, ONLY THE BOOKS HAVE BEEN REVIEWED. GIVEN THE PROGRESS UP TO NOW, EMBASSY WOULD EXPECT APPROVAL FOR EXPORT OF THE MATERIAL IN TWO OR THREE MONTHS. END SUMMARY

1. ACCORDING TO MALAGASY GOVERNMENT REGULATIONS, ALL BOOKS, RECORDS, FILES, TAPES AND FILMS EXPORTED FROM THE COUNTRY MUST BE REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY THE GOVERNMENT CENSOR. ACCORDINGLY, BENDIX EMPLOYEES BEFORE THEIR DEPARTURE FROM MADAGASCAR IN JULY 1975 WERE ADVISED BY THEIR ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE EMBASSY, NOT TO SHIP SUCH MATERIAL WITH OTHER PERSONAL EFFECTS, SINCE TO DO SO COULD JEOPARDIZE THE TIMELY SHIPMENT OF SUCH EFFECTS AND RISE CONFISCATION OF THE NON-CENSORED MATERIAL. MOST BENDIX PERSONNEL LEFT THEIR BOOKS, RECORDS, PERSONAL PAPERS, ETC., IN THE NASA/BENDIX DOWNTOWN OFFICE LOCATED ADJACENT TO THE CHANCERY IN THE CARE OF MR. CARTER

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AND MR. BISHOP OF BENDIX CORPORATION (NOT THE EMBASSY).

2. PRIOR TO SUBMITTING THE MATERIAL TO THE AUTHORITIES FOR CENSORING, THE TITLE OF EACH SONG AND EACH BOOK, AND AN EXPLANATION OF EACH TECHNICAL MANUAL - TO INCLUDE THE INDEX - AND PERSONAL PAPERS HAD TO BE TRANSLATED INTO FRENCH. ALTHOUGH BENDIX ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL WERE AWARE OF THIS REQUIREMENT, NO MECHANISM WAS SET UP TO MAKE THE NECESSARY TRANSLATIONS BEFORE OR AFTER THEIR DEPARTURE JULY 27TH.

3. THE EMBASSY AGREED TO HELP BFEC IN EXPEDITING PERSONAL AIR FREIGHT SHIPMENTS, INCLUDING THE MATERIAL SUBJECT TO CENSORING. FOLLOWING DEPARTURE OF BENDIX ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL, EMBASSY FOUND THAT OF THE 1800 BOOKS, 400 TAPES, 300 RECORDS, 20 MOVIE FILMS, 100 ROLLS OF FILM AND UNCOUNTABLE SLIDES AND PICTURES LEFT IN BENDIX OFFICES, ONLY A SMALL PERCENTAGE OF THE BOOKS HAD BEEN TRANSLATED. ACCORDINGLY, A GROUP OF FOUR FORMER BFEC MALAGASY EMPLOYEES WAS SET UP TO TRANSLATE AND TYPE UP THE REQUIRED INFORMATION. ONCE THIS WAS COMPLETED, THE MATERIAL WAS PACKED INTO 44 BOXES, 5 CARTONS, 5 FOOTLOCKERS, 2 SUITCASES AND 1 WOODEN CASE, PINKED UP BY THE PACKERS AND TAKEN TO THEIR WAREHOUSE FOR SAFE KEEPING. THE LIST OF MATERIAL PREPARED FOR REVIEW BY THE CENSORS WAS SUBMITTED TO THE BIBLIOTHEQUE NATIONALE FOR REVIEW/APPROVAL.

4. SINCE SUBMITTING THE LIST ON SEPTEMBER 19, THE EMBASSY HAS INQUIRED WEEKLY WITH THE BIBLIOTHEQUE NATIONALE AND POLICE ON THE PROGRESS OF THE CENSORSHIP. AS OF NOVEMBER 14, ONLY THE BOOKS, LESS TWENTY TITLES, HAVE BEEN REVIEWED. IN AS MUCH AS THIS IS A MAJOR UNDERTAKING FOR THE CENSORING AUTHORITIES AND IN LIGHT OF THEIR PROGRESS TO DATE, IT MAY TAKE ANOTHER TWO OR THREE MONTHS TO COMPLETE THE CERTIFICATION. IN PRINCIPLE, THE AUTHORITIES HAVE TO LISTEN TO EACH RECORDING, BUT IN PRACTICE THIS IS GENERALLY NOT DONE. (HOWEVER, IN THE CASE OF ONE USG EMPLOYEE CARRYING AN OFFICIAL PASSPORT, ENTRY OF HIS RECORDINGS WAS DELAYED FOUR MONTHS WHILE EACH ONE WAS REVIEWED.) EXACTLY WHEN THE MATERIAL WILL BE SENT IS A FUNCTION OF HOW MANY OF THE RECORDINGS/TAPES/FILMS/PHOTOS

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THEY WILL INSIST UPON SCREENING.

5. PLEASE ASSURE SENATOR TOWER THAT THE EMBASSY WILL CONTINUE TO PRESS LOCAL AUTHORITIES FOR THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE RELEASE OF THE MATERIAL. ONCE RELEASE IS APPROVED THE MATERIAL WILL BE FORWARDED AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE. SHEINBAUM

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